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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Rumania/USSR/Bulgaria/Albania

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This is UNEVALUATED Information

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25 YEAR RE-REVIEW

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COUNTRY USSR/Rumania/Bulgaria/Albania**DATE DISTR.** 31 Aug. 1954**SUBJECT** Ship Paneling Procedures**NO. OF PAGES** 2**DATE OF INFORMATION****REFERENCES:****PLACE ACQUIRED**

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION**Soviet System**

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1. When in port a team which consisted of a medical officer, a land-based border guard officer, a customs official, and a SOVROMTRANS-PORT official boarded a ship prior to any debarking or unloading. With them came several enlisted border guards. Although the search normally took place in the basin, it often occurred after the ship had been tied up. Soviet regulations called for a two-hour examination of the ship; if the examination was completed in less than two hours the team started over again knowing they would be sent back if they finished too soon. The ship was divided into three parts with one customs official, one border guard enlisted man, and an accompanying crewman assigned to a specific area. The customs and medical inspections were routine. The ship's radio room was sealed by the panel while the ship was alongside. After the inspection, a border guard enlisted man was posted at both the stern and the bow while the ship was in port. Ships were also searched in the same manner prior to departure. The Soviet officials were courteous, polite, considerate, and more lenient than the Rumanian teams who

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were described [redacted] as "eager amateurs". [redacted]
 [redacted] the Soviet team was equally considerate in the
 case of Western vessels. Maritime border guard personnel never took
 part in this paneling system on board the ship.

Rumanian System

2. The Rumanian paneling system closely resembled the Soviet type. A team consisting of a SOVROMTRANSPORT agent, medical officer, a land-based guard officer, and a customs official searched all incoming and outgoing Rumanian vessels at the docks and not in the basin as prescribed. Sometimes, the ships were almost completely unloaded before the inspection team arrived. Several border guard enlisted men as well as three minor customs officials also accompanied the party to the ship. The ship was divided into three parts; a customs official and a border guard enlisted man did the actual searching with the aid of a crewman. Ships were searched in the same manner prior to departure. Only suspect members of the crew were physically searched and questioned. The ship's radio room was sealed while the ship was alongside. All vessels, regardless of nationality, were treated in the same way with the exception of Soviet vessels which received more lenient processing. The Rumanian panel group, once aboard, were stricter than the Soviet teams. Maritime border guards never took part in the paneling or came aboard the ship. Two border guard enlisted men were stationed at the bow and stern while the ship was tied to the dock.

Bulgarian System

3. The Bulgarian paneling team, similar in organization and function to the Soviet and Rumanian types, was the most lenient. [redacted]
 [redacted] Bulgarian ports didn't have the Communist atmosphere found in Rumanian ports. The search party boarded ships at the dock or in the basin and the ship's radio room was sealed. In Bulgarian ports, as in Western ports, the captain's word was taken and no search was made. Border guard enlisted men were stationed at the stern and bow while the ship was docked. [redacted] 25X1, 25X1,

Albanian System

4. [redacted] There was no inspection,
 no doctor or a pilot. [redacted]

Effectiveness

5. [redacted] 25X1
 [redacted] it was easy to conceal items on a ship from inspectors and [redacted] normally, smuggling and other clandestine activities were discovered by means of denunciation, not by actual interception or discovery. Paneling teams never had sufficient personnel to turn a ship "completely upside down." [redacted] 25X1
 [redacted] the seals on the radio room could have been broken and resealed at anytime without detection by the authorities.

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